



Reflections 85

REFLECTIONS

Volume 17
1985

Editor
D. David VanHoy

STAFF
Melanie Lynch
Amanda Thomas
Crystal Nauyokas

Faculty Advisor—Thirlen Osborne

CONTENTS

Thirlen Osborne	AFFIRMATION	1
Rebekah Powell	LESS OF ME	1
Kriste Colle Gibson	ALGAE	2
Terri Lampkin	FIRST FLOWER	2
E. Pogo Costley	ANGELIC GIBBERISH	3
Terri Lampkin	AN EASTER STORY	4
Charlotte H. Porter	ONE BLANK WALL	6
E. Pogo Costley	APPLES	7
Dennis P. Quinn	ARMADILLO INVASION	8
Doreen Payne	A TRIBUTE TO MY GALAXIE 500	9
Lisa Atkins	BEIRUIT EPILOQUE	10
Beverly Badgett	GREY STRIDERS	11
Carol Ann Smith	BEQUEST FROM A CANDLE	12
Kaylynn Watts	DYING TO SELF	13
S. Roy Werline	BROKEN RECORD	14
E. Pogo Costley	COLD FEET	15
Amanda Thomas	COMPLETION	16
David Robertson	DEATH IN BALTIMORE	17
	WATCHFUL	17
Kaylynn Watts	FRIENDSHIP FOCUSED	18
Dennis P. Quinn	GINK	19
Crystal A. Nauyokas	JESUS' MOTHER	20

Terri Lampkin	LETTERBOX	21
S. Maurice Jones	NIGHT ESSENCE	22
E. Pogo Costley	PHOENIX	23
Penny Morrow	LOVE IS . . .	23
Kaylynn Watts	REMANTS	24
Brenda Harris	LORD OF MY SOUL	24
E. Pogo Costley	SHE GOES/SHE GOES/SHE GOES SHE GOES . . .	25
Charlotte H. Porter	GROWING	25
Tois Roach	SILENCE	26
Beverly Badgett	SPIDER IN A CORNFIELD	28
Bill Stowe	ST. PAUL'S, 1985	29
E. Pogo Costley	SUCH CARING FRIENDS	30
GLenn and Nancy Bottoms	THE LAND AT THE BOTTOM OF THE WELL	31
Jan Lewis	SNOWFLAKES	36
S. Roy Werline	THE LATER- THAN-YOU-THINK SHOW	37
	THE WAY OF THE WORLD	37
E.M. Blankenship	THE WRITER'S WORK	38
Kriste Colle Gibson	WITHOUT ME YOU CAN DO NOTHING	39
Rebekah Powell	A LITTLE NOTE TO THE WORLD	39

CONTRIBUTORS

Lisa Adkins, senior psychology major
Beverly Badgett, senior music education major
E.M. Blankenship, chairman of the English Department
Glenn and Nancy Bottoms, professor of economics, and wife
E. Pogo Costley, sophomore music composition major
Kriste Colle Gibson, the Information Services writer of Gardner-Webb College
Brenda Harris, senior religious education major
S. Maurice Jones, senior business management major
Terri Lampkin, senior mathematics major
Penny Morrow, sophomore education major
Crystal A. Nauyokas, junior English major
Thirlen Osborne, professor of English
Doreen Payne, sophomore sacred music major
Charlotte H. Porter, sophomore religion major
Rebekah Powell, freshman music major
Dennis P. Quinn, professor of English
Tois Roach, senior religious education major
David Robertson, Director of Information Service at Gardner-Webb College
Carol Ann Smith, freshman communications major
Bill Stowe, professor of English
Amanda Thomas, sophomore chemistry major
Kaylynn Watts, senior psychology major
S. Roy Werline, adjunct professor of English

ILLUSTRATIONS AND PHOTOGRAPHS

Cover — Garland Davis with D. David VanHoy
"Apples" — contributed by E. Pogo Costley
"Gink" — contributed by Dennis P. Quinn
"Spider in the Cornfield" — Ted Eaves
"Snowflakes" — Ted Eaves

CONTEST

Each year the English Department of Gardner-Webb sponsors a literary contest for the student works chosen for publication in *Reflections*. All works are judged anonymously by the *Reflections* staff and the final judges. This year's final judges were Dr. Joyce Brown, Dr. Bill Stowe, and Mrs. Dorothy Edwards.

AWARDS

First Place	COLD FEET	E. Pogo Costley
Second Place	AN EASTER STORY	Terri Lampkin
Third Place	REMNANTS	Kaylynn Watts

HONORABLE MENTION

PHOENIX	E. Pogo Costley
APPLES	E. Pogo Costley
BEIRUIT EPILOGUE	Lisa Atkins

AFFIRMATION

(on hearing the cantata *Heaven Rejoices* at Boiling Springs Baptist Church, December 19, 1982)

Mary sang "Impossible!"
Gabriel reassured her.
I wept.

The beauty of it all —
The enormity of it all
Drew reluctant tears down my cheeks.

And I, unused to this flow of appreciation and love,
Remembered the minister's words:
"If you have been emotional, you will be more so;
If you have not been, you will be."

Mary had her affirmation, and I mine.
Thank you, blessed Holy Spirit.

Thirlen Osborne

LESS OF ME

Sometimes things in life seem so demanding
Without reason, purpose or understanding;
And when I feel like giving up,
Then I'll just turn over my cup,
For the Holy Spirit to fill it to the rim
With less of me, and more of Him.

Rebekah Powell

ALGAE

Consider.

A weed grows.
Great care is given to weeds.

A thief steals.
The law hunts at every trail.

A stuntman falls.
All the world remembers failures.

A writer publishes.
Printed lines warm hearts.

Algae
Expected
Grows, feeds, lives.
Consistently.

I do not care for algae.

Kriste Colle Gibson

FIRST FLOWER

I gathered your love one soft summer day — —
Like a child picking flowers
I tugged at your heart 'til it gave way in my hands.
But children so often forget that plants without roots
always die . . .
Especially when they aren't watered.
And so our love went the way of all summer blossoms
Just another pressed flower
in a book on the shelf.

Terri Lampkin

ANGELIC GIBBERISH

I do not understand
Russian, or German,
Or Angelic Gibberish.
I don't know the world's mysteries;
I can't prophesy, and sometimes
I think my knowledge
Is severely limited.

I have not much faith;
How could I disrupt harmless mountains
Sleeping in their natural habitat?
My wealth seldom goes
To feed the hungry
(Other than myself.)

I am not about to give my life
For what I believe; I am
Quite sure of that.
I'd rather live it, in order
That I might tell others.

Sure, I know I see things
In a different light than most,
But what I do know is that
I love a lady
In an honest, selfless way,
And I think that
Is pretty profound.

E. Pogo Costley

AN EASTER STORY

It all started out pretty simple. Ed Johnson, the choir director, up and gave his resignation one Sunday evening at the preaching service. Seemed like most folks were pretty shocked but I don't know why. Everybody knew he snuck money out of the offering plate and even I had smelt whiskey on his breath. Seems like folks would of been glad he was resigning his post. But they weren't.

On the way home Momma pursed her lips together and Pa said, "There's going to be trouble. I can feel it. I can feel it in my bones!" My Pa had mighty peculiar bones. They always knew when something was gonna happen and this time was no different.

That week on wash day Mrs. Mabeline Tucker came by. Mrs. Mabeline had more than her share of chins and the biggest ankles I ever saw. Pa said she had the disposition of a pregnant sow and knew more gossip than the whole Maytown Women's Auxiliary. Momma was hanging the clothes out on the line and I was handing her the clothes pins—in twos like she liked them—when Mrs. Mabeline unhitched the back gate and waddled across the yard. "Well hello Elsie, aren't you the busy bee? Got that wash all done and not even afternoon yet." She raised her eyebrows and her third chin quivered as she turned to me. "And how're you, Lizbeth?" "Why I'm just fine Mrs. Mabeline," I said as I looked at her fat ankles. "Have you lost weight Ma'am?" "Why no, at least I can't say that I've tried. Do I look it?" she said with a wide smile. "Well Ma'am, it's just your ankles. They look smaller than usual." I guess that was the wrong thing to say 'cause Mrs. Mabeline turned a bright pink and Momma said, "Elizabeth May Thornton, you get in that house this instant, you hear?" I heard alright and I went. I don't mess with nobody that calls me by my full name. I really wanted to hear what Mrs. Mabeline's visit was about though, so I stood at the screen door and kind of eavesdropped. Mrs. Mabeline's shrill voice drifted across the yard, ". . . and then Lou Ann Calloway told Linda Jo Simpson that the preacher fired Ed Johnson, that they had some big argument and he gave him his walking papers." "Now Mabel," my momma cut in, "you know the preacher wouldn't do a thing like that. Why John Perkins is the finest man around. When my Jimmy turned the tractor over on his leg, he came every day to visit. Every day—and Mrs. Perkins brought dinner for us besides. He's a God-fearing man and shame on you for doubting it." "Well, you may be right but Ed Johnson, bless his heart . . ." I quit listening after that. Mrs. Mabeline had a habit of blessing people's hearts and then spreading the darndest rumors about 'em anybody every heard.

Next Sunday we had a business meeting after preachin'. I ain't never seen that church so packed. We just had a small country church with about a hundred members but only half that many attenders. The meeting room had three choir pews up front and two rows of pews for the congregation down the middle. We had an organ and a piano which most folks' churches didn't have in our part of the county. Momma said we had so much cause we were fortunate. I guessed that meant we had more fortunes than the other churches around.

The business meeting didn't start until after the preaching service was over; then the preacher stood up and called the meeting to order. There was lots of hushin' and shushin' and one lady carried her screaming baby outside. Finally, it was quiet. The preacher began: "The first item of business is the matter of finding a choir director." He had hardly finished his sentence when Mr. Jerry Baker stood up and said, "Seems to me from what I've heard tell we need a new preacher!" People got pretty feisty from there on out. Mrs. Mabeline stood up and said, "Well Mr. Johnson, bless his heart . . ." and I knew we were in trouble then. I don't remember much after that. A fly kept buzzin' around my hair and I swatted it for most of an hour. Some people seemed to agree with Mr. Baker, some stood up for

the preacher, and some people didn't seem to know what was going on, leastways they didn't make no sense. Momma held tight onto Pa's arm as if she was holding herself back from something. I do remember when little Susan Smith stood up and said, "You people just ain't Christians at all!" and ran out of the church. That happened right after my stomach growled.

It was nearly two o'clock when we finally got home for dinner. "What's everybody so mad about at church?" I asked Momma as I set the table for dinner. She didn't say anything but Pa said, "Well, Lizbeth, I know it don't seem right but sometimes even church folks don't get along together." "But Pa, everybody got along fine until Mr. Johnson left. Why did he leave anyhow? Mrs. Mabeline says." Momma cut me off. "Lizbeth, you don't pay no nevermind to what Mrs. Tucker says. Mr. Johnson left because it was God's will — plain and simple." Momma was trying to look mad at me but as she turned to the sink I saw a tear run down her face.

After that Momma and Pa quit going to Wednesday night prayer meeting. Seemed like a chore to even go to Sunday preaching. The organ player quit coming and so did the piano player. We got a new choir director but the choir had to sing without music most of the time. And the Easter Cantata was coming up. About a third of the regular attenders resigned. They were the ones that believed the preacher had fired Mr. Johnson.

Seemed like to me that even Jesus didn't come to our church no more. I wanted Him to be there more than anything but people were just so mean to each other — bickering and practically shouting at each other in church — I didn't blame Him for not wanting to be there. I didn't even want to be there.

Easter was getting close and our preacher planned a Maundy Thursday service. We almost didn't go. Pa sat at the dinner table staring into his coffee for the longest time. He looked almost as if he was trying to decipher what he should do. Earlier, I had kind of overheard him and Momma discussing the church. He had said the church was going nowhere and that we might as well give up and look elsewhere. But Momma had said, "It'll all work out, Jimmy. Wait a while. You know the Bible says all things work for good to those who love the Lord." I guess Pa decided she was right because suddenly he pushed back his chair and said, "Elsie, get the kids ready; we're going to church."

It was the usual type of service. A lot of singing and praying but the preacher didn't preach. We took the Lord's supper instead. But the preacher did say something that stuck in my mind and I guess a lot of other people's. It was after the deacons had passed out the little plastic cups of grape juice. I was holding mine real careful because I still had stains on my dress from last time when I didn't. The preacher read the scripture about when Jesus said "this is my blood" and then he paused and said, "On Sunday we celebrate Jesus' death on the cross for our sins and the miracle of His power over death on that third day. God loves us and He sent His Son because He loves us. And because we are sinful creatures. That cross saved us from sin but it didn't stop us from sinning. Let us all examine ourselves that we might take this cup worthily." Well it seemed like ten minutes before anyone took that cup. There were a lot of heads bowed. As for me I started feeling mighty guilty about the big ears I had developed recently. I told God that — and I shore felt better afterwards.

Easter Sunday came and there wasn't a cloud in the sky. We got up early so we'd all be ready on time. I had a new dress and a hat and gloves besides. So did my momma and sister. I couldn't hardly keep myself from skippin' on the way to church. This was the Sunday of the Easter cantata and I just knew something wonderful would happen. Maybe my bones were like Pa's and could tell when things were gonna happen. Momma didn't seem too sure.

When we got there I noticed right off that the choir was kind of smallish. I didn't

know how the altos would get along without Elvira Purdue singing louder than everybody else. Elvira had resigned from the church two Sundays ago. There was a lady I'd never seen before sitting at the organ. Momma whispered to Pa that she was a member of Plumcreek Baptist Church and was hired to play for the cantata. The new choir director's voice was kind of shaky as she introduced the program. She was young and real pretty and I bet she never drank whiskey. The first two numbers were songs I hadn't heard before. I listened real close to the words though so I could figure out later why so many people were crying about them. I'd never seen so many different colors of Kleenex in my life. I didn't understand what was going on until Laura Edwards sang "Old Rugged Cross" and then my heart felt like it would burst inside me.

When the last song was finished — no one in the whole church moved. And then Mr. Baker slowly walked up the aisle and hugged the preacher. Before I knew what was going on everybody was hugging everybody and apologizing for things they had said. I even told Momma about the eavesdropping and she forgave me just like Jesus forgave our church for forgetting the real reason we were a church at all. It wasn't important to follow the preacher or to follow the choir director. Following Jesus was what was important. As we walked home from church Momma whispered, "Lizabeth, don't you ever forget this day, you hear?" And I never have.

Terri Lampkin

ONE BLANK WALL (revised 1985)

One blank wall is all I need . . .
to hang up what I'll never be.
One little space in which to place . . .
all the runs I'll never race.
One more point from which to dangle . . .
special times I couldn't handle.
One white square on which to make . . .
an impression that I learn to fake.
One clean spot on which to plop . . .
all the junk I ever got.
One more face on which to look . . .
for the love I never took.
One more way to quickly erase . . .
every hurt I'd rather not chase.
One blank wall was my eternity . . .
but now, the Masterpiece I see.

Charlotte H. Porter



APPLES

I remember
As a child
My grandfather
Peeling apples.

This he always did
For his grandchildren,
Sharing the slices
And telling tall tales.

Today in the nursing home
Strapped in the wheelchair
Slightly lethargic
He told me a story.

Nana sliced
A barely ripe apple.
Peeling it patiently,
She wrapped it in napkins.

As Grampa ate
He offered to each of us,
Stretching out leathery hands
To children and grandchildren.

As I partook, I remembered
As a child, my grandfather
Peeling apples; it seemed to me
Like the Last Supper.

E. Pogo Costley

ARMADILLO INVASION

They massed
under cover
of nightnare darkness.

Behind pitchfork cacti
their bright eyes
flashed.

They synchronized watches,
reviewed
their plans,

and waited,
confident of
total victory.

Officers whispered
with forward observers;
their radios

buzzed and cracked,
pierced the night silence
like crickets gone mad.

My sweating,
my tossing and turning
were all reported.

At dawn
they moved out.
I could go nowhere.

Armadillos advanced,
robbed my dreamless brain
of all poems.

Dennis P. Quinn

A TRIBUTE TO MY GALAXIE 500

She and I have traveled far
And comfortably I add,
Although I did not buy her,
I owe it all to dad.

She works for me most everyday
And asks nothing in return,
Yet all she needs from human hands
Is oil and gas to burn.

The mountains do not bother her
Or distance she must go.
About the hardships she goes through,
She'd never let me know.

Her tattered body needs repair
With paint and chrome and tire,
And perhaps if she had all these things
Her worth would be much higher.

Her appearance is quite ridiculed
By numerous friend and foe,
But if they sought assistance
She'd be the first to go.

When we are together
It is very plain to see;
We have a special friendship,
My '69 and me.

Doreen Payne

BEIRUIT EPILOGUE

It is one year later,
yet the scene is the same:
young men,
 fighting,
 dying,
and for what?
A worthy cause, some may say,
 and yet
 have they ever felt the pain?
Or is it just another tragedy,
the kind
that only happens
in the movies
or to other people?
Picture the wives,
the sons and daughters,
fathers and mothers,
who wait
 and wait
 for a letter
 or a phone call
 saying, "All is well."
But it never comes.
Has anyone cried the tears
of the mother
 who sits
 clutching a photo,
 praying
 for an end
 to a nightmare
 that is only beginning?
And finally,
 when that phone call comes,
 what are we supposed to say?
"I'm sorry."
 "He was a fine young man."
 "He was a hero."
 "This is how he would want to be remembered."
We speak
 words of condolences,
 and yet,
 can they ever bring him back?

What is war
that men must die?
Can there *ever* be peace
in the midst
of the pain
and the horror?
Who can answer?
Who can comprehend
the senselessness of it all?
As one flag
stands only
half as tall
and another
is given
to a wife
or, perhaps,
a mother,
it all seems
so final
and so unfair,
and yet
nations continue to fight.
"The tragedy will pass," they say,
but will it ever?
"Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

In loving memory of my friend,
Cpl. William Ray Gaines, Jr.,
and Michael Ray Wagner.

Lisa Atkins

GREY STRIDERS

I heard their searing breath
as they loomed past in the distance.
The horizon was grey, too still
when they came. I was taken unawares.
Too peaceful—
The land they passed over trembled with fright!
A shiver went up my spine. A mental picture—
Vietnam; darkness; tears.
I finished stacking the wood and went inside,
But I still hear them, breathing in my mind.

Beverly Badgett

BEQUEST FROM A CANDLE

I sit and watch a flickering flame,
Which glows and glistens in the night.
It lights my world so I can see;
It gives me wisdom, warmth, and light.

An icy wind from somewhere far—
Comes and blows upon my flame.
First, it danced, as if for joy;
And then it quickly wisped away.

It left behind, for just a second—
A tiny, glowing wick.
I keep that spark inside of me;
It keeps my soul a-click.

You're the candle, and your love, its flame;
The spark, your hope and love for living.
I keep these things inside my heart
And will share these gifts you've given.

Carol Ann Smith

DYING TO SELF

"... we are weak, but you are strong; you are distinguished, but we are without honor."

I Cor. 4:10

I guess
I never
realized
the reality
of dying to
You
Until last
night.
And I
was angry
Lord.
Yes,
I believe
in You.
I long
for eternal
Life
But I never
really
knew
that I
lost my right to
decide.

I guess
these are
the times
when your
promises
come in
when we
realize
the importance
of your
Word.
Before
it was
"God is love."
Now it is
"He is strong."
I guess I just
never realized
the seriousness
of commitment
to you
until last night

And I am weak
Lord,
But claiming
Your Strength.

"And he has said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is perfected in weakness'."

II Cor. 12:9

Kaylynn Watts

BROKEN RECORD

At seventeen
I liked to listen to the Rolling Stones.
I played the same song
Over
 and
Over
Because I liked it a lot and
Because it reminded me of
Hot, sticky kisses.
I danced in front of the mirror and
Saw a woman —
Strong, witty, graceful —
Always older than twenty-five.

At thirty-seven
I like to listen to the Rolling Stones.
I play the same song
Over
 and
Over
Because I like it a lot and
Because it reminds me of
Hot, sticky kisses.
I dance in front of the mirror and
See a woman —
Strong, witty, graceful —
Always younger than twenty-five.

S. Roy Werline

COLD FEET

I think of you sometimes
At night,
When darkness envelopes me.
And I think sometimes
That someday
You might be lying here next to me,
And we could watch the lights dance
On the ceiling
Streetlights
Filtering down through the trees . . .
And then you'd touch me
With your cold feet.

Minnesota people
Have cold feet.
And Wisconsin people . . .
And Ohio people . . .
And New York people . . .
And Florida?
It's just a place to visit
When your feet get too cold.
And if you stand in one place
Too long
Your feet
Might freeze to the ground.

You think of me sometimes
I know
When glistening snow beckons you to the window.
And you think sometimes
That someday
You'd like to be lying here next to me
And we would hear the crickets chirp
Quiet songs,
Love sings
Serenading young lovers . . .
But then you deny your feelings,
And get
Cold feet.

E. Pogo Costley

COMPLETION

At home, the radio spouts its usual truisms.

I don't know.

Friends stare and whisper.

They sleep through my pain.

I limp out, injuries uncared for;

Sitting in the corner, tired of all I see and hear, clenched fists
in my face.

I don't know.

Death.

An important subject, but not too important.

Too many tears, not enough pain.

I don't know.

The radio squawks on.

The weather, food news, activities: small talk passes by.

I never notice.

I watch myself sit.

I watch time pass.

I watch them sleep.

I watch.

I don't know.

Death, mere death.

Important?

No.

Immolation, consumption.

Important?

Yes.

I don't know.

Haggard faces stare from beyond the wall.

Draining eyes plead.

Heart strains, blood cools and drops.

Lungs fill.

Once more.

And again.

I don't know.

One look back.
More bodies than ever return the gaze;
Silent mouths open,
Wet eyes red.

I know.

"This morning a young rebel and troublemaker
was put to death outside the city. Details to follow."

Amanda Thomas

DEATH IN BALTIMORE

Fevers rise over noon-white walls
to a concentrated fly: Poe
in a frockcoat saw crawling there
jettison a soul out of night.

"Reynolds," he breathes, his mind's word-ghost
(the boatman in *extremus*)
whose sails black rush on icy sheets
past a dream of a frozen hell.

Now darkening wings — psyche or fly —
smother the flames of angelic pride;
and gates of horn, his feverish eyes,
anoint with balm from Gilead.

David Robertson

WATCHFUL

A woman, curled into sleep,
a quiet makes: yet where she rests
to a man's eye
uneasily lies Heaven,
or Hell.

David Robertson

FRIENDSHIP FOCUSED

The one on the bottom
Is Mary
She has honeysuckle hair
And angel kisses
All over her face
She loved Andy
At State
He loved Susie
At the University
Now she loves sweat
And kaiki green

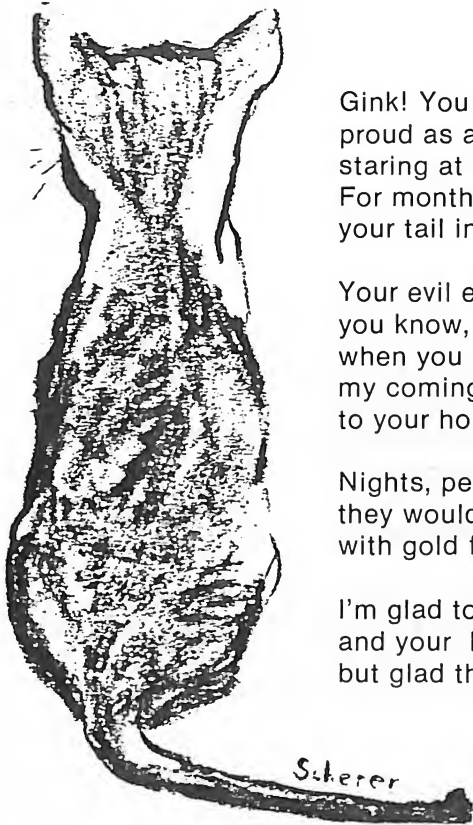
The one with the chestnut hair
Is Debbi
She drank Jack Daniels
And loved rock and roll
Now she loves children
And cheesecake

The one with blue hair
Is Laura
She was tall
And liked to live
We all cried
Because
We thought
You had to be
80 to die

Kaylynn Watts

GINK

On my wall is a crayon portrait of a cat named Gink. The picture was given to me by a friend whose children had named the cat after a storybook witch.



Gink! You sit
proud as a lion!
staring at the wall.
For months I've been watching
your tail in mid-swish.

Your evil eyes used to frighten me,
you know,
when you challenged
my coming
to your house.

Nights, peddling up on my bike,
they would hold me
with gold fire.

I'm glad to remember you
and your house
but glad that you look away.

Dennis P. Quinn

JESUS' MOTHER

She was little more than a child herself,
But she was serene, wise beyond her years.
She gently placed a tiny hand
Over the child within her womb,
And she knew.

She lay upon her child-bed,
Not in a palace grand,
Not even in a fine hotel
On a soft bed of down.
And as her body yielded forth
A son, she knew.

From very distant lands
Came rich and mighty kings.
Bringing priceless gifts.
And as they lay them in adoration,
Worshipping her child, she knew.

Then one day He was grown.
He traveled, He preached, He
Loved, He forgave, He healed.
He was mocked and put to death.
None of these things surprised her,
Because all His life—she knew.

Crystal A. Nauyokas

LETTERBOX

I was cleaning out my letterbox today
When I came across a letter
that you had sent my way.
And I smiled in spite of myself
as I read across the lines,
How bright those memories still shine.
Pictures of you and me—
Strolling through the park
walking hand in hand
staring into each other's eyes
Stealing silent kisses under starry skies
Of youthful love long ago—
Those times are gone.
Address changes
The writing ceased
Slowly memories of love decreased.
Only one letter left to show—
and now that too might as well go.
Why should I hang on to things that have been?
So I tossed the old letter into my waste sack—
But then on second thought retrieved it back
and tucked it into the letterbox.
You see—
there are some things I haven't forgot.

Terri Lampkin

NIGHT ESSENCE

I listen to the soft, flowing Debussy piano.
It is night and I have endured an endless
day of rigid stress, of wicked pressure.
I lie in my bed, holding on to each note,
Merging with it,
Letting it have its soothing way with me.
Those daytime concerns, I leave behind.
I enter a new dimension.
My thoughts begin to lose coherence as I succumb
to a painless semiconsciousness.
Now the tranquil music releases its gentle grasp.
I am alone as all things physical and
tangible fade into the opaque oblivion,
The world I seek asylum from.
I settle in a new serene solemnity,
Waiting now, ever so patiently.
Soon I enjoy the translucent dream visions.
I meander in and out of worlds,
Splicing two as one,
Embracing it for a timeless eternity then
moving onward.
I lose myself in deep valleys;
I ascend joyously to the heavens.
I find my perfect lover only to lose her to
the sudden wicked droning of an alarm
clock.

S. Maurice Jones

PHOENIX

When she arrives, I will be there
Waiting in the straight-backed chair
Smoking a cigarette, and watching
As the plane door
Kisses the terminal corridor.

And for ten short days
We shall try to revive
The dying embers of fires
Kindled in youth,
Fueled in the telephone booth.

And as she leaves, I will be there
Watching from the straight-backed chair
Smoking a cigarette, and sighing
As the Phoenix roars,
Reduced to its ashes once more.

E. Pogo Costley

LOVE IS . . .

Love is a ray of sunshine
That guides you out of the darkest night.
Life is a strong, loving hand
That pulls you out of the deepest plight.
Love is a friend who listens
To all your tales of woe
Love holds you securely,
But when necessary, it lets go.

Penny Morrow

REMNANTS

I can remember
Pressing flowers
Between pages
And movie tickets
Torn in half

I can remember
Reading letters
Over and over
And your picture
Under my pillow

Why do I have
A scrapbook
Full of you
And a stranger
In my arms

Kaylynn Watts

LORD OF MY SOUL

I have peace as darkness falls,
Because I know my Lord is Lord of all —
Lord of happiness, peace and rest,
Lord of sadness, war, and death.
But most of all, I know my Lord
Is Lord of my soul.

Brenda Harris

SHE GOES/SHE GOES/SHE GOES/SHE GOES . . .

She goes about making friends
Too numerous to count
In quiet blazes of innocence,
Baring her soul in selflessness.

She goes intently forward in life,
Ever pressing on to higher goals,
Achieving variegated tasks
Without the expectation of praise.

She goes patiently through her trials
Crying in silence when no one is near;
Picking up pieces that don't always fit
And shaping them carefully into experience.

She goes silently into my heart
Wearing warm eyes, and timid smile
Cautiously treading on the fragile edges,
And healing past wounds with soft words.

E. Pogo Costley

GROWING

Cogwheels of time are spinning . . . winning,
Pushing me forward, . . . toward
Plateaus of existence . . . persistent.

Charlotte H. Porter

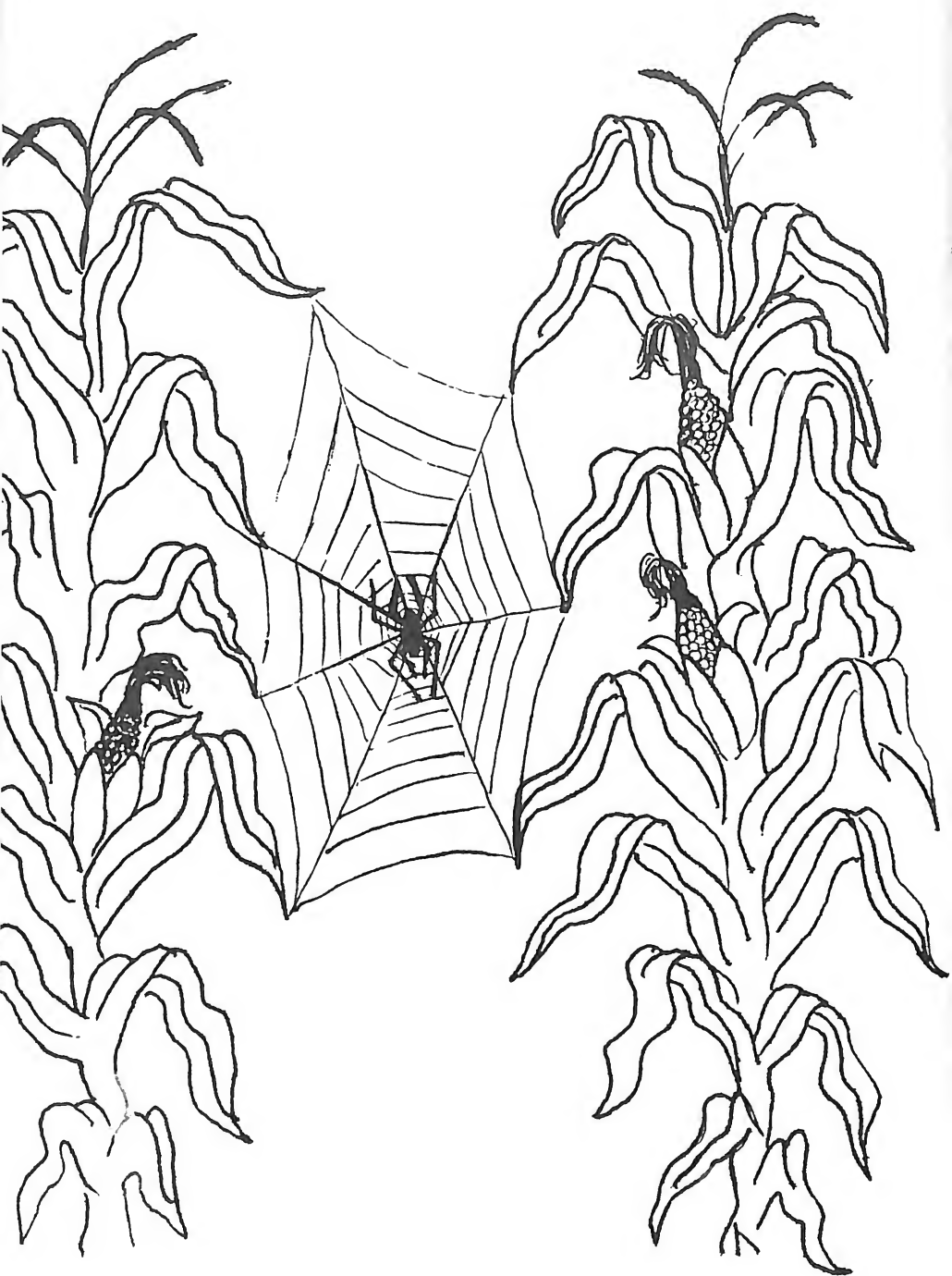
SILENCE

Running from anger . . .
Is it a pout or is it restraint?
Remembering the past . . .
Is it horrid nightmares or sweet fairytales?
Repenting from sin . . .
Is it black shame or sweet assurance?
Realizing deep feelings . . .
Is it overflowing joy or dark sadness?
Repairing the heart . . .
Is it a violent war or a peaceful synthesis?

Often, it is a selfish request,
but sometimes a necessary one.
It draws me inward to hide, to rest.
It envelopes me, warmly, as a blanket.

Today I plead for it—Can you tolerate it?
For today it is not our enemy—
It . . .
is silence.

Tois Roach



SPIDER IN A CORNFIELD

I walked for a while in a field
That's near my home today.
The green blades spread across the rows
Trying to block my way.

What do you think that I saw there,
In a web spun so fine?
A thing with a soft furry body,
Could it be he's not unkind?

He had no eyes that I could see
But legs he had galore.
Two pairs in front, two pairs in back
When counted made twelve minus four!

I almost bumped into him
As I came out the row.
I said, "I beg you pardon Sir.
Goodbye now I must go."

Beverly Badgett

ST. PAUL'S, LONDON, 1985

Foot-weary, dogged, and a bit lost,
I stole into the cathedral where
Donne had discovered that
No man is an island.

I was not prepared.

Head bowed, but only to scan
The pages of my guide book,
Resting quietly in a forward pew,
I thanked God for the respite.

I was not prepared for the
Sudden mounting of a hymn,
The afternoon prelude of a
Chancel choir, whispered
From the altar place, but
Thundering through that great hall.

Most human efforts fall quite
Short of glorifying God, but
I am prepared to vouch for
St. Paul's. If your faith lacks
Force, steal into its chamber and
Wrap yourself in the Living Word.

Bill Stowe

SUCH CARING FRIENDS

I have such caring friends.
When I was seventeen
My eyes fell beneath the scalpel.
They did not come to visit,
For they were afraid
Their stares would make me feel self-conscious
Of the patches on my eyes.
How considerate.

I have such caring friends.
They help me drink myself blind.
When I run out of cash for drinks,
They say it's all gone to my head
Or I would not say what I've said
So then they guide me to the stairs.
How thoughtful.

I have such caring friends.
They call me up sometimes
To find out if I am all right.
They ask me if there's something wrong.
I tell them there is nothing wrong,
As far as I can see.
How could there be something wrong
When I have friends like these?

E. Pogo Costley

The Land at the Bottom of the Well

Walter stood with his mother and her husband watching the little boys race their dog sleds. There were five boys perched each on his own long sled. Walter knew about sled racing. He used to win every race he entered, but he never had raced on Treaty Day. He had never felt like it.

This year Walter was seventeen and this year, too, Treaty Day was not his celebration. He stood by his mother through the whole, miserable day. He clapped when she did, walked with her to better vantage points, and encouraged her when she attempted to lift the fifty-pound sack of flour in the Flour Pull. He may have entertained some pride when she hoisted the sack that marked her the strongest woman, but he never showed it. He gallantly carried the winner's fifty-pound prize, a sack of flour, first to the tribal administration building and later to his mother's kitchen.

The day wore on under the undecided sky, now blue, now grey. The wind, funneled down the frozen river, threatened to overturn the stack of flour sacks left from the Flour Pull. Gusts came from up the river or down in no certain pattern. The snowmobile race remained unfinished, as the machines refused to move when struck head on by the force of them.

It was not the extreme cold that made Walter miserable. He was used to that. Nor was it the competition or the noise or the crowd. Walter usually liked a rowdy time. It was the final ceremony that ruined Walter's Treaty Day — Five Dollar Day, his people called it.

His mother's other children met in the administration building, all gathering about her husband, their father, teasing her for her muscles, asking if they must eat bannock for every meal now. Walter walked ahead of the family to their accustomed place. He shifted the flour sack to the floor, discreetly positioning it between himself and his mother's family. From his fortress behind the firm white sack, Walter watched the laughing mouths which filled the room, but the sounds he heard came from across the years. There were the numbers, Treaty Numbers, being called out in the monotone of a bored government agent; there was the answering cheer from the tribe, and the rapid counting of children and then money. Every year had been the same. Seventeen years of jovial Treaty Days pounded on his ears until he closed them and heard no more.

When, from within his dream, he saw his mother's husband move to the front, he knew the money was being distributed. The number of his mother's husband had been called. Walter watched the agent count the children and then carefully place a five dollar bill for each member of the family in the outstretched hand. His mother's husband, too, counted the bills. He had nine children and a wife. Eleven five-dollar bills would buy much beer and shoes and he intended to be cheated of none of it. Walter was glad this man had never had control of his five dollars.

In the world of the treaty Indians, children shared their father's treaty number. A baby born to no father was given a number of his own. It was a blood thing, not legal. Walter's mother had been married when Walter was born, but her husband had been away in a tuberculosis sanitarium for the whole year preceding the birth. Walter did not know his father, only that he was a man without a treaty number.

After the money had been given out, the meeting in the administration building broke up. The roar of engines could be heard. Walter pocketed his bill, first crumpling its newness away. He had never treasured new things.

He stood at the window facing the river and watched the first of the red planes ski to a stop. It would take two planes to bring in the beer for tonight's parties. Walter turned his head enough to watch the RCMP from the corner of his eye. Beer was not

legal on a reserve, but the Agent and his visiting RCMP's as a courtesy, did not see it arrive on Treaty Day. Walter thought they could have stopped the illegal beer runs. He wished they would. Walter did not like getting drunk.

The officials packed their checked-off lists and empty money bags into their government folders and left by the side door. They would walk down the road to the Agent's house where their own party waited.

Walter shuffled across the bare floor, his eyes, unfocused, on the dirty blue walls, their scattering of tattered maps hung crookedly with colored tacks. The room's one change in seventeen years was age. Walter did not care. He closed the door, which had been left open, behind him and stepped directly onto the snow.

Walter felt the crackling, still air that meant the night would be bright and cold, though only the children would feel it. Everyone else would be under a roof celebrating Treaty Day. Walter hurried down the hill to the river. There had always been enough beer for every five-dollar bill, but Walter had gotten anxious about buying his. His beer was his ticket to his mother's party; otherwise, he would have no place to go tonight.

They did not eat supper, for there was no time. Walter's mother could not be bothered with meal preparation when there was partying in her house. In her honor, the first can opened was passed to her. She took it, sitting cross-legged on the bare plywood floor of the government pre-fab house. After the birth of her fourth baby, not counting Walter, her husband had bought the house for her. He said he could afford the payments with five child allowance checks. He counted Walter when he cashed the checks.

Walter waited in the opening between the kitchen and the living room. His mother's sack of flour was resting in the space which the builder had left vacant for a refrigerator. It was a handy niche for storing bulky items. He glanced back once to be sure he had stabilized the sack. He would not want it to fall onto the wood stove. Flour ignites quickly, he had heard. The stove was seldom hot, but it might not take much heat.

Walter would like to have sat beside his mother, to share his beer with her, but he would have to walk across the open center of the room and Walter did not want to draw attention to himself. They knew he was there and they would later drink what was left of his beer, while ridiculing him, but Walter was not ready now for their taunts. He was not drunk yet.

He pulled his supply into the living room, and, pushing the cans against the wall, sat on them. Under cover of the laughter surrounding his mother, he opened a can and drank it down without stopping. Already he could see his mother's husband looking at him, nudging his brothers, the uncles of Walter's siblings. Having learned when he was eight that a little beer helped sooth the hurt, Walter did not stay in his mother's house sober. The beer did not stop the ridicule or remove black hatred. It did not destroy the pity of his grandmother, nor did it provide him a welcome when the family ate its meals. What it did was give to him a mother. Drunk, Walter saw that his mother loved him, that she wanted to hold him close, to protect him, but she could not because her husband would not let her. When he was sober, Walter could not find that softness in her eyes, the tenderness he could see clearly with the aid of a few beers.

He stayed drunk to find her love, and for her love he could take the jeers, the constant insults. It would be cruel to go away and leave his mother when she secretly so stedfastly clung to him. So he came to her house because the beer told him that his mother loved him.

After a time a few of the children sneaked through the back door. They were cold, Walter heard them say, and there was no fire in any of the houses they had been to. There was no fire in this one either, but Walter was not too drunk to remember where he could get wood to build one. He took the ax from beside the stove and casually chopped up the back door steps until he had a bundle of planks small enough to fit into the stove. He threw them in, along with several beer cases and a lighted match. The deed done, without a word, Walter resumed his seat on his remaining cans.

Before he had finished his next beer, the pine planks had been consumed, but the children had gone out into the snow and the adults were not able to feel cold. Walter hoped the children would not come in again. He did not know where he would get more wood. The furniture had been burned many winters past, as had the kitchen cabinets. The inside door frames had gone not so long ago since for several years the government had paid for the gathering of firewood from the wood on the ridge above the town. When the nearest trees had been used as fuel, the people had returned to burning whatever was within reach. Already the front door steps had gone and now the back ones.

When he heard the familiar greeting, Walter popped open the can that would be his last. "Why here's Walter," his mother's husband said. "Wonder where he came from?" And they laughed. It was quite funny, really, and an intriguing mystery, for no one knew where Walter had come from.

A sympathetic teacher at the boarding school had told Walter how to respond to his mother's husband. Following this advice, the boy took a long drink and laughed along with the others. Sometimes it helped, allowing him a little time before the loud argument began.

Tonight his laughter gave him no time. It maddened the drunken men. His mother's husband seemed to think he was being taunted by his wife and her bastard son. He turned to the woman, herself giggling, as she always did, confronting her with his hardened fists and the over-old question, "Where did he come from, Mary?" he asked. "Tell me!" he added whirling his threatening fists, spitting through the holes between his teeth.

Walter's uncertain strides had nearly brought him to his mother's rescue when he heard, for the first time, her answer to the question. Walter listened to his mother tell her husband how lonely she had been while he was away at the sanitarium. Her young blood needed a man, she said to her husband in her flirting voice. When fishing season came that year, bringing sportsmen from the south, she had allowed one of them to seduce her. She couldn't help it, she pleaded with her husband. She had grown used to a man's attentions and three months had been a long time without.

Walter heard his mother swear she had not loved Walter's father. He had been a satisfaction. Then he saw her look straight at her husband and admit that she had loved Walter no matter whose son he was.

At the first blow the man struck, Walter rushed to grab him. But he stopped when he heard his mother, through her bloodied lips, say she was sorry about Walter. He had always been a trouble; she should have sent him away. Her words slurred from beer and blood, she declared that she had not loved the boy so much after her other children had come and now that he was no longer a child, she hardly cared for him at all. Her husband probably slapped her around some more, but Walter, having left the house, barely recognized her cries above the noises from other houses he passed as he strode up the snow-packed road away from the village.

Walter's loneliness hurt. His chest was so tight he breathed in pain. He would have cried, but the pain throbbed intensely and closed off his throat. Through all the years of his life, the assurance of his mother's love had been the only solace he had had.

He hesitated at the Sisters' door, but he did not knock. He knew he had no friend there. The nuns, his school teachers, had classed Walter as a drunken Indian long ago. They would never let him in, especially tonight when they expected all Indians to be drunk and dangerous. Besides they never opened their heavy doors to anyone after dark, and hardly to an Indian at any time.

Walter would visit the priest. The Father, though old and through with the earth, would at least listen. The spot of light at the edge of the town became a sort of hope to Walter for the first time in his life. But the lights went off before the boy reached it and the priest lost his chance that night. Walter would not waken the Father for the little bit of comfort he might receive from him.

The noise from the playing children had calmed. Most of them were huddled into the doorways of the school. Like generations before them, they had learned how to

survive out-of-doors on these sparking, cold nights. If he wanted to, Walter could find them and snuggle in. Having a certain admiration for the older boy, they would welcome him. This would make him feel good, but Walter would not go to them. He feared that once he found someone to be with, he would talk too much. He did not want the children to know unhappiness as deep as his. It would come soon enough.

Without a greeting, he passed the quiet black masses in the doorways. He trod the crunchy snow beside the road, moving dreamily between the lighted homes. He heard his mother's boisterous giggle when he came opposite her house and thought briefly about the potential danger from the flour sack, but he did not stop.

As the moon rose, sending its unwelcome light into Walter's frozen world, he entered the fir woods which began at the Indian Agent's house. Walter would have enjoyed the warmth of the Agent's party, but he did not knock there either. Although the Agent liked Walter in daylight, he shunned all Indians after dark. Walter intended to crouch beside the warm chimney and thus survive another night. He had done this before when his mother's parties had gotten too personal.

This night Walter would not spend pressed against the Agent's chimney. When he spied the snowmobile parked under the trees, immediately he knew the warm bricks would not solve his loneliness as well as a ride in the cold wind. His soul was in need of exhilaration, not peace, he told himself. Walter did not need a key to borrow the snowmobile. He possessed some mechanical skills, learned while he was at boarding school in the city.

Walter knew the owner of the snowmobile heard it leave, but would not give chase. Although there was another machine available, the Agent would wait for the safety of daylight, laughing at the prank as he sent tribal employees out to find the machine. Everyone suspected that the Agent's nonchalance was camouflaged cowardice, but it made no difference to the Indians why he allowed them to abuse him.

Glistening snow flew ahead of him as Walter careened down the river, ignoring the smooth middle except to cross it when he spied rougher spots on the opposite side. Like all of the winter-bred people, Walter knew how to drive safely on snow and ice. He knew all of the rules, but Walter had ever felt apart from rules. He obeyed them only when it suited him and tonight it did not suit him.

The curves of the great river whipped away under the crashing machine as they took Walter many miles down river. Around islets he sped, not noticing how the majestic spires of the firs rose straight from their mounds of untrod snow. Watching from a hillock, shaped by the rising moon, was a small wild winter beast. If Walter saw the scene, he paid no notice. To him life was waiting for the next moment and a relief that the past one was gone. No one had pointed out its beauty to him.

There were no words of poetry given to Walter. The old language was stored in the minds of the old men and even they no longer remembered the soft nuances of their tongue. Their harsh Indian speech was utilitarian only. Or sometimes narrative, but if the old tales were once told with wonder and delight, they were not now. Walter used to want to know the old language, but no one had offered it to him.

In the nuns' school he had heard about a world different from his in the careful English that a Frenchman uses. Numbers were done things with in English, a language whose only use was for taking apart and calling words by names other than what they said. So that shoes were not clothes for feet, but were a noun, and to run was not how you got home to your mother, but a verb. Walter knew nouns and verbs in English and some words in the old tongue, but he knew no poetry in either.

The river widened and narrowed. It carried its ice imprisoned waters through dense forests and across flat marshes. It embraced islands. It lapped beaches or dug deep into rocks leaving thin ledges to shelter fish. It encircled its portions of earth in spirals so that a river ride of twenty miles could lead no further from home than half that distance. Often it curved to within less than a mile from itself.

This particular curving character of the river gave Walter what he sought. The constant demand of piloting his speeding craft caused him to depend entirely upon himself to get him into the future, moment by moment. On his wild mount, Walter was master. For that time he escaped from the enslavement of being the tribal out-

cast into the freedom of being a unique man.

When the snowmobile spluttered, slowed, and stopped, Walter knew where he was. Not half a mile over the hill was the village. It would not take him many minutes to follow the children's well-packed trails to his mother's house, but he was in no hurry. Tomorrow he would bring gasoline in a can over those safe paths, but tonight he would make his own way.

The snow lay five and six feet deep on the smooth forest floor and in drifts it rose to over twice a man's height. It was folly to travel off the trails, but by choosing foot-falls carefully, it was possible to follow the paths made by rivulets of sun-melted snow, frozen hard by night. Seventeen childish winters had taught Walter the courses of these streams. He would ascend the hill by way of one, but first he would tramp the fluffy riverbank, dredging his own canyon six feet deep behind him. He swam more than walked, but he proceeded gracefully, never floundering as a stranger would. The snow, cascading by his ears, made no noise; the river sounds could not leave their depths below the ice; the air was still, no wind was left over from the day. In this silent, slow world, Walter felt as sure a master as on the swift, furious snowmobile. The calm was his, too.

But the escape afforded by the river could not follow into the snow. His longings, made maudlin by beer, caught him at last. Pictures, moon-fashioned, crept into his conscious mind. The rich light, and the flat, graceful limbs of the firs above him made fine black lines on brilliant snow. A primeval delight would not be mastered. It urged Walter's eyes to the right where over a shabby bank the ribbon of river shimmered. Then his awakened sight found the majesty of the forest. On his left stood the firs, each tree rising straight and black from the white snow and letting its shadow fall behind. There was a spell here, a pure magic in which all was good and belonged together, black and white. Entranced, Walter climbed from his tunnel onto an exposed log.

His mind formed no thoughts; he owned no words. Instead his soul reached for the magic, but the magic danced before him, outside and all around him. He could not bid it come to him. He could not address it. He did not know its name.

The old men remembered their Spirits. They told tales of them, of how they created the earth, nature, man. Was the magic made by the good Spirits of the stories? Walter, though he knew no names, tried to call to the Spirits of the old men and of times before them, but they would not come. Then Walter remembered that these Spirits did not exist. The Priest had been very firm in convincing him of that.

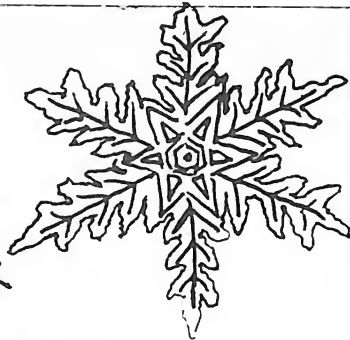
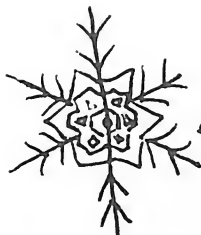
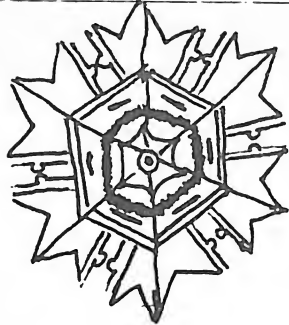
The Priest had his own Spirit. The nuns knew about it. In church and before school began each day they said words to it. Sometimes the words were solemn, sometimes joyful. Walter wanted some of those joyful words now. Perhaps the magic belonged to the Priest's Spirit. But the words had been spoken neither in English nor the old tongue, but in a secret language Walter could not know.

Quietly pulsing about him, the magic flowed on the edge of Walter's thoughts. He tried again to summon it, wanting so desperately to be a part of the unity it created. He must belong. His thoughts surged wildly. He would seek the Priest now, wake him, and get the joyful words. He knew they were the secret.

His body lunged off the log, following his feet on the crusted snow. Up the hill Walter stumbled, finding safe paths only by chance, and calling to the magic to wait for his return.

When he sank into the crevice, deep into snow, he did not at once stop going forward. His arms and legs continued to take him to the Priest. As the snow fell in upon him, taking away first the moonlight and then the crisp, cold air, Walter tried to talk to the Spirit. He had remembered part of parts of chants. "Our Father, . . . Kitchi Manitou . . .," he began, but he knew no more and it was too late anyway.

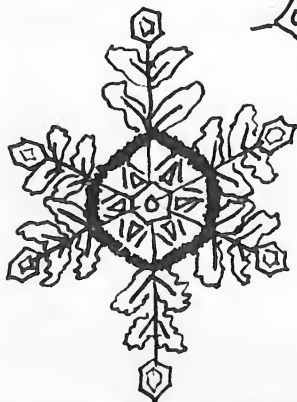
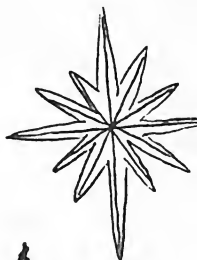
The snowmobile was found before dusk the next day, but Walter was not missed. If anyone ever wondered where he was, they satisfied themselves that he was living with this family or that on up the river in a shanty beside the railroad. The children found him in a ditch when the thaw came.



SNOWFLAKES

Snowflakes—see how they
fall,
Dancing their way slowly to the
ground.
Decorating the earth with
Their silvery whiteness, making
A brilliant, still wonderland.
Snowflakes are the handiwork
of God.

Jan Lewis



THE LATER-THAN-YOU-THINK SHOW

Insomnia strikes
So I pour my sixteenth cup of coffee and
Switch on the tube to
Watch Godzilla wreck toy trucks and
Sweep away erector set buildings
With one pass of his scaly tail.
Panic in the streets!
A thousand screaming extras
Flattened by a prehistoric paw.
Wide angle shot
As the monster rises out of the bay,
Creating a tidal wave in a washtub.
Not a minute too soon,
The holocaust is ended
By a show of military might and
The wonders of modern technology.

The camera cuts to Raymond Burr,
A pre-Perry Mason-idealistic-young-journalist,
Who interviews scientists, generals, and
Unsquashed Japanese men-in-the-street.
Too bad he doesn't think to ask Godzilla
How it feels
To bed down in peaceful Jurassic slumber
And wake up in downtown Tokyo.

S. Roy Werline

THE WAY OF THE WORLD (with sincere apology to William Congreve)

Fops and rakes pay Millamant court,
But Mirabel won't be sold short.
With plots and with plans
He'll win Millamant's hand
While the others only can Wishfort.

S. Roy Werline

THE WRITER'S WORK

The writer focuses his thoughts in the
point of a pen
And pours out his energy across
the page
Planting seeds for multiple ideas
to spring and grow.
With a lucky thrust he throws out a line
That ties the mountains and the sea into
a ball that's all his own
But which he must be willing to share
Or else deny himself the honor due
to one who creates.
The work is sometimes tedious
Requiring patience behind the scenes.
Playing with elusive words
Placing them carefully in order
The writer puts them in rows to show
the disorder or the harmony
Which truthful allocation brings to
the mind.
What better vocation can anyone find?

Ernest Blankenship

“WITHOUT ME YOU CAN DO NOTHING”—John 15:5

“Man is great only when he is kneeling.” — Pope Pius XII

Dust to Dust
Walking
Between
That
Parallel,
Time by the hand.

There came a man.
Nothing more matters!

Jesus
A chance to commune with omnipotence.

We work our jobs.
We play our sports
We eat our foods.
On
Calloused
Knee?

Kriste Colle Gibson

A LITTLE NOTE TO THE WORLD

God's love is seen everywhere . . .
Even in the stillness of the air.

Rebekah Powell